**Anaphylaxis Interview Questions**

Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent/Central Office Administrator

School/District: Cedar Falls, IA, Black Hawk County

Contact: Director of Elementary Education

1. What is your policy with regard to nuts (peanut and tree nuts) in your schools?

* Nut free district? No
* Nut free school(s)? No
* Nut free classroom(s)? In some cases they are “allergy sensitive zones”
* Nut free table(s) in the lunchroom? Have “allergy sensitive zones” in the lunchroom
* (And if policy is written, can you send a copy or direct to a copy?)

Thought it would be really controversial. Attorney advised that “nut free zones” are very difficult to nearly impossible to guarantee; recommended creation of “allergy sensitive zones” instead of “nut-free zones.”

Written guidelines were created using a community process: a committee including parents of students with several different life-threatening allergies, teachers, principals, and community members. Invited a doctor to speak with the group the first night to set the tone; no pre-written and expressed expectation for the presentation. Doctor shared the difficultly in managing a totally “nut-free” school or district and that it is important for kids with allergies to learn to manage their symptoms. Committee used several resources, including those from the National Schools Boards Association (NSBA), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). All of these provided supporting documentation and guidelines with regard to life-threatening allergy management. Most helpful resource was from the NSBA website, “Safe at School: Comprehensive Guide to Protecting Students with Life-Threatening Allergies.”

No written policy, but “guidelines” are available on their website. Guidelines include “roles and responsibilities” of each group: administrators, parents, nurses, etc.

1. What is your policy with regard to serving nuts/nut products by your school or district food service?

* No use or serve nuts/products by food service?
* No serve peanut butter by food service?
* No serve of pre-packaged PB&J sandwiches?

No written policy. At elementary they are not serving PB&J, even prepackaged. At junior high school they were serving PB&J and their attorney advised against it. Central office administrators anticipated a huge backlash, but have not had any push back from pulling them at junior high, possibly because they have not been serving them at the elementary school for some time.

1. If you have a policy of limiting nuts, why and how was this decision made? Discussion was made at the Superintendent’s Cabinet to ultimately pull sandwiches at the junior high level based on recommendation of district’s counsel.
   * How is this limitation enforced? Director of Food Service enforces this by not purchase the product. Biggest challenge is enforcing guidelines around life-threatening allergies has been on the bus. Kids still sneak food on the bus. Took awhile to get the transportation manager on board. Now they keep a clip board of allergy action plans for students with life-threatening allergies (in a manila folder) on the bus in case of a sub driver. Took awhile to enforce that.
   * What type/amount of training has been needed to enforce the policy

At the beginning of the year central office administrator reminds principals to remind of life-threatening allergy guidelines, to review those guidelines, and understand the allergy safe zones. Nurses speak to staff at each of the buildings at an annual training on use of Epi-pens and reminders of guidelines and practices.

1. What about actual practices in your district/school(s)/classroom(s)? see questions above
2. What has been the impact of policy?

* On gluten-free students not an issue that has been brought to her attention. District food service provides many dietary accommodations for several different groups, including religious groups at appropriate times.
* On vegetarian students see above.
* On F&R meal students F&R for the district is under 20%; this has not been an issue for them. However, at a previous school with 68% F&R this was a much more difficult discussion and took a bigger backlash.
* On district budget? Don’t use sunbutter or any alternative; unknown impact.

1. What alternatives to peanut butter has your district/school implemented? None
2. What feedback have you received regarding this issue?

* From students?
* From parents/families? Parents on the committee who have children with allergies have been very excited and appreciative.
* From community members/groups?

1. What do you think has gone well with implementing your policy and what would you like to have changed with implementation if you could go back? Having the committee and meeting several times; bringing committee ideas to and sharing with administrators for feedback and then bringing back to the committee for revision; communication (letter) to all parents; a card/bookmark sent home annually to remind of “allergy sensitive environment guidelines” *[perhaps a refrigerator magnent?]*;
2. Is there anything else I need to know or anyone else I need to speak to? Nurse supervisor very helpful. One family who had a student with life-threatening allergies was very negative and challenging at the elementary level; central office administrators really struggled working with them. When this family went onto the junior high program, the school was really proactive with working with the family at the school-level that made a huge difference in successfully meeting the needs of the family and student.